

MACROPUS LANIGER.

Great Red Kangaroo.

Spec. Char.—MAS. *Macropus vellere brevi, molli, et quasi gossipino; colore arenaceo-rufo; capite humerisque cinereis, et arenaceo-rufo leviter tinctis; corpore subtilis exalbescente arenaceo-cinereo; artubus caudâque albidis; digitis nigris; rostri lateribus albis nigro variegatis.*

FEM. *Colore corporis superioris cæruleo-cinereo; inferioris, et artuum albo; faciei lateribus strigâ albâ distinctè notatis.*

Descr.—MALE. General colour sandy red slightly tinged with orange, especially on the flanks and rump; neck, back and shoulders washed with ashy grey; the same tint, but somewhat paler, is also observable on the outer side of the thigh; head deep ashy grey, tinged in parts with sandy red; sides of the muzzle as far as the angle of the mouth and the chin pure white; intermingled with the white of the muzzle are some bristly black hairs, forming two interrupted black lines; ears grey on the exterior, with a few black hairs near the tip, and white on the interior; throat, chest and all the under surface tawny white tinged with grey; arms and legs tawny white; hands and toes blackish brown; tail tawny white tinged with grey.

FEMALE. General tint rather paler; the sandy red on the sides of the body less distinct; head and shoulders of a paler grey, and as well as the haunches tinged vinous: differs also from the male in having a distinct broad white mark extending from the angle of the mouth backwards under the eye, and in having the under parts of the body and limbs pure white.

YOUNG. The upper parts of the body of nearly a uniform pale slate-grey.

	Male.		Female.	
	feet.	inches.	feet.	inches.
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	8	2	7	0
„ of tail	3	0	2	9½
„ „ tarsus and toes, including the nail	1	2	1	0
„ „ arm and hand, including the nails	1	6½	1	0
„ „ face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear	8		8	
„ „ ear	5½		4½	

Kangurus rufus, Desm. Mamm. Suppl. p. 541.
Kangurus laniger, Quoy et Gaim. Voy. de l’Uranie, p. 65, pl. 9.

THIS noble species of Kangaroo, the largest and one of the most elegant of its race yet discovered, has hitherto been so little known, that, with the exception of my own specimens, a single skin, and that in the most imperfect condition, is all that has ever reached Europe. The specimen referred to is the original of the figure and description in the zoology of the “Voyage de l’Uranie” as quoted above. The specific term of *laniger* appeared so inapplicable to my specimens, as, together with the inaccuracy of the plate and description, to induce me to question their identity; and in order to clear up this doubt satisfactorily I visited the Parisian museum and examined the original, when I found, to my great astonishment, that the deficiencies of natural hair on many parts of the skin had been replaced by finely cut sheep’s wool, whereby the appellation of Woolly Kangaroo was rendered more correct than I had anticipated: it would have been better for science had this circumstance been stated. The sides and upper surface of the body of those I brought to Europe are the only parts of the animal that have any tendency to the woolly character, and the hair on these parts entirely wants that crispness mentioned by Messrs. Quoy and Gaimard. The specimen in the museum of the Jardin des Plantes was presented to the officers of the expedition by Fraser the botanist, during their stay at Sydney, and was said to be from Port Macquarrie; but I am led to believe that some mistake must have arisen on this point, and that the Macquarrie river was the locality intended, since it is an animal entirely confined to the interior.

Two of my specimens were obtained in South Australia, and the others on the plains bordering the Namoi; from the works of Oxley and Sturt we find that it frequents the banks of the Morumbidgee and Darling; we may consequently infer that it is very generally dispersed over the great basin of the interior of Australia, as it certainly is over the eastern portions of that continent. I regret that these authors should have given such slight notices of this interesting animal, which they must have frequently encountered in their expeditions. Capt. Sturt merely states, that while encamped on the Morumbidgee “we saw several red kangaroos, and succeeded in killing one. It certainly is a beautiful animal, ranging the wilds in its native freedom. The female and kid are of a light mouse-colour.” Having, like Capt. Sturt, had the pleasure of seeing this species in its native wilds, I fully concur in his opinion as to its beauty; it is, in fact, the finest of the Australian Mammalia: and the female is particularly attractive, from her graceful, slender, and elegant form, and from the snowy whiteness of her legs and under surface contrasted with the blue-grey tint of her sides and back. The male, especially when adult, has the red and white more blended into each other; the blue-grey which distinguishes the female, being rarely if ever perceptible; hence has arisen the trivial names of red buck and blue doe for the two sexes respectively: the female is also called the flying doe, from her extreme fleetness, for which her whole structure is so admirably adapted, that I have little hesitation in saying, that under favourable circumstances she would outstrip the fastest dogs: occasionally, however, both sexes are run successfully, either from the chase being over soft mouldy soil, or from the female being encumbered by a large and heavy young one, which she has not been able to

disengage from the pouch, and which she will always do, if possible, when hardly pressed. The beautiful female represented in the accompanying Plate was captured under these circumstances. Having observed a pair sheltering themselves from the heat of the sun under a small group of Myalls (*Acacia pendula*) on the plains near the Namoi, I succeeded in leading a fine dog to within seventy yards of them without being perceived. The dog was so quickly at the heels of the one he took after, and which was carrying a large young one, that her escape was impossible.

The male figured by her side was also procured by a single dog, which after a short chase "pulled" and kept him at bay until I came up and assisted in despatching him, but not before he had made a fearful resistance.

Although the Great Grey and Great Red Kangaroos frequently inhabit the same portions of the country, still they affect localities of a different description; the former resorting to grassy valleys and "brush growing on the dark mouldy soil," whilst the latter confines itself to the hard red stony ridges clothed with box, and open plains, in the midst of which it may frequently be seen in the daytime basking in the sun. The large male (the weight of which I judge to be above two hundred pounds) was killed while we were making a forced march between the Murray and Adelaide, at a time when all our provisions were exhausted, and I can therefore speak with a lasting recollection of the goodness of its flesh, which sustained me and my party for four days.